



DOE

News Release

NEWS MEDIA CONTACT:**Walter Perry, DOE, (865) 576-0885****Greg Cook, Bechtel Jacobs Company LLC, (270) 441-5023****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****September 14, 2000****DOE ELIMINATES DRUM MOUNTAIN AT PADUCAH SITE**

PADUCAH, KY — Drum Mountain is gone.

Packaging of the 35-foot-tall mound of crushed drums was completed today at the Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant. By late afternoon, workers were picking up the last remnants and packaging them in intermodal containers for shipment to a Utah disposal site. The dismantling of the pile took about 11 weeks to finish.

"I congratulate Bechtel Jacobs Company and all its subcontractors, the United States Enrichment Corporation, and especially the men and women who have worked many long and hard hours under very difficult conditions to get this important job done," said W. Don Seaborg, DOE site manager in Paducah. "They accomplished this without a significant safety incident, while working on hot summer days in very uncomfortable protective clothing and equipment, and without a release to the environment. Well done. We also thank the Commonwealth of Kentucky and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency."

Work was performed by USEC under contract to Bechtel Jacobs, DOE's managing and integrating contractor for environmental work in Paducah; Portsmouth, Ohio; and Oak Ridge, Tenn. The 40-person crew, including about 25 members of the PACE union, filled about 160 intermodals with more than 2,500 tons of crushed drums. The drums — once filled with depleted uranium tetrafluoride (DUF4) — will be shipped by rail beginning later this month or early next month. All of the intermodals will be shipped by the end of the year.

The packaging of Drum Mountain was completed two weeks ahead of schedule despite equipment problems that forced a change in how the drums were handled. When work began June 23, the crushed drums were shredded, then baled before being placed in intermodals. Problems with the baler, however, forced USEC to abandon this part of the process and place the shredded drums directly into the containers. USEC added additional personnel to bring work back on schedule.

The packaging of Drum Mountain was accompanied by a number of additional safety

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procedures to ensure there would be no off-site releases of radionuclides. Water runoff controls were built and covers, shields and water misting devices were installed around the conveyors and shredder to reduce dust. Environmental monitors installed around the site showed there was no off-site release of radionuclides.

Also, samples have been collected from each intermodal to ensure the material meets the acceptance criteria of Envirocare of Utah Inc., which will dispose of the drums.

And, finally, workers visually inspected each piece of material as it was removed from the pile to make sure that only crushed UF4 drums, lids and rings were shredded. A small amount of other material was collected and is being characterized separately before disposal.

Removing Drum Mountain was considered a priority because it was a potential source of surface water contamination and because there is a burial ground beneath the site that could contribute to groundwater contamination. The project was placed on a fast track — moving from public comment on the plan to completion in about a year. The \$7 million effort was funded through additional funds appropriated for the Paducah cleanup effort by Congress.

Drum Mountain represented less than 10 percent of the total volume of scrap metal stored at the Paducah site. Work to remove the balance of scrap will begin next year.